



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **TWO MORE BIRDS TEST POSITIVE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS** *Residents Urged to Continue Reporting Dead Birds to County Vector Control*

County Vector Control officials announced today that a Barn Owl in Vista and a Cooper's Hawk found in Otay Mesa have tested positive for West Nile virus.

"We appreciate the public's help in reporting dead birds. They are the best surveillance tool we have," said Gary Erbeck, Director of the County Department of Environmental Health. "The cool weather will slow mosquito breeding activity, but the virus can continue to spread."

Vector Control continues to pick up and test crows, ravens, jays, hawks, owls, and falcons to monitor the spread of the virus. The public is encouraged to report dead birds that meet the following criteria: the bird has been dead for less than 24 hours, does not have a foul odor, is not covered with ants or flies, is not stiff; and the body is intact and has not been hit by a car, has not been shot, or killed by animals. All other dead birds should be placed in a plastic bag and be discarded in a covered trash can. While you cannot get West Nile virus from dead birds, you should wear disposable gloves if you must handle birds.

Protect yourself from mosquito bites by wearing insect repellent containing DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus; wear long sleeves and long pants when outside, especially at dawn and dusk; and ensure windows and screens are well-maintained to keep mosquitoes from entering your home. Eliminate mosquito breeding sites around your home and use mosquito eating fish in unused swimming pools, ponds and fountains.

To report dead birds or mosquito breeding sites, please call County Vector Control at (888) 551-INFO (4636). You can also report dead birds on the County's West Nile virus Web site at [www.SDFightTheBite.com](http://www.SDFightTheBite.com).

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